

Abstract of the Invention

An apparatus for capturing and loading fowl having a mobile frame to which a forward conveyor and a rearward conveyor are pivotally mounted. The forward conveyor has plurality of fingered drums that are rotated to engage the fowl and place them on the conveyor for movement to the frame. The forward and rearward conveyors are pivotally mounted for movement about a common vertical axis. Each conveyor may also be pivotal about a horizontal axis. The fowl are discharged from the forward conveyor onto the rearward conveyor which transports the fowl from the frame to storage cages. A rearward fingered drum is provided to engage the fowl and discharge the fowl from the conveyor and into a plurality of vertically stacked forming the cage compartments. The rearward conveyor includes a first rearward conveyor pivotally mounted to the frame and a second rearward conveyor slidability connected to the first rearward conveyor. The rearward finger drums are automatically positioned adjacent the vertical storage compartments via linkage members connected to the first and second rearward conveyor which automatically urge the second rearward conveyor in sliding extension and retraction as the rearward conveyor is pivoted upward and downward, respectively. The linkage members also include a piston and shaft assembly for selectively extending and retracting the second rearward conveyor.